

mittee had also another object in view—to elevate the character and dignity of the bench. The public impression now seemed to be that the judge who tried cases involving small amounts need not be of so elevated character or talent as the judge who adjudicated large cases, and this they considered a radical defect in the system. It was also most erroneously thought that anybody would do for a criminal judge, although some of the most momentous political questions at times came up before that tribunal, and the committee considered it one of the most valuable parts of the system which they recommend that two, three or four judges could be sent on the criminal bench. A third reason why the system recommended was desirable was that it would prevent conflict of jurisdiction. As the case now stood, there were constant conflicts of jurisdiction between the Criminal and City Courts of Baltimore. All this would be obviated by the establishment of but one court. If the people exercise any discrimination in the selection of their judges, it could be safely left to the judges themselves to decide which should occupy particular benches. If the people did not know which of the judges should sit in each court, they would be led to select judges all of whom would be competent to sit in any of the courts, and thus the character of the judiciary would be much exalted. Mr. Ritchie submitted the following substitute for the section:

“There shall be in the eighth judicial circuit six courts, to be styled the Superior Court of Baltimore city, the Court of Common Pleas, the Circuit Court of Baltimore city, the Criminal Court of Baltimore city, the City Court of Baltimore, and the Supreme Bench of Baltimore city. Each court, except the Supreme Bench of Baltimore city, shall consist of one judge, who shall be elected by the legal and qualified voters of said city, at the election hereinbefore provided, and shall hold his office for the term of fifteen years, subject to the provisions of this constitution with regard to the election and qualification of judges, and their removal from office, and shall exercise the jurisdiction hereinafter specified.”

Mr. Ritchie argued in favor of his substitute.

Mr. Gill advocated the report of the majority of the committee.